

IRISH WAR NEWS

THE IRISH REPUBLIC

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“IF THE GERMANS CONQUERED ENGLAND.”

In the London “New Statesman” for *April 1st*, an article is published—“If the Germans Conquered England,” which has the appearance of a very clever piece of satire written by an Irishman. The writer draws a picture of England under German rule, almost every detail of which exactly fits the case of Ireland at the present day. Some of the sentences are so exquisitely appropriate that it is impossible to believe that the writer had not Ireland in his mind when he wrote them. For instance:—

“England would be constantly irritated by the lofty moral utterances of German statesmen who would assert—quite sincerely, no doubt—that England was free, freer indeed than she had ever been before. Prussian freedom, they would explain, was the only real freedom, and therefore England was free. They would point to the flourishing railways and farms and colleges. They would possibly point to the contingent of M.P’s, which was permitted, in spite of its deplorable disorderliness, to sit in a permanent minority in the Reichstag. And not only would the Englishman have to listen to a constant flow of speeches of this sort; he would find a respectable official Press secret bought over by the Government to say the same kind of things over and over, every day of the week. He would find, too, that his children were coming home from school with new ideas of history ... They would ask him if it was true that until the Germans came England had been an unruly country, constantly engaged in civil war ...

The object of every schoolbook would be to make the English child grow up in the notion that the history of his country was a thing to forget, and that the one bright spot in it was the fact that it had been conquered by cultured Germany.”

“If there was a revolt, German statesmen would deliver grave speeches about “disloyalty,” “ingratitude,” “reckless agitators who would ruin their country’s prosperity, ... Prussian soldiers would be encamped in every barracks— the English conscripts having been sent out of the country to be trained in Germany, or to fight the Chinese— in order to come to the aid of German morality, should English sedition come to blows with it.”

“England would be exhorted to abandon her own genius in order to imitate the genius of her conquerors, to forget her own history for a larger history, to give up her own language for a “universal” language— in other words, to destroy her household gods one by one, and put in their place alien gods. Such an England would be an England without a soul, without even a mind. She would be a nation of slaves, even though every slave in the country had a chicken in his pot and a golden dish to serve it on.”

Put “Ireland” in the place of “England” in these extracts and “England” in the place of “Germany,” and it will be admitted that the humiliating state of national subjection in which we live, and the cunning methods of spiritual conquest practised on us by England have seldom been better described. If the article was not written by an Irishman in a bitterly satiric mood, it shows how well Englishmen understand how the treatment they have been accustomed to apply to other nations would feel, applied to themselves. But my own opinion certainly is, that every sentence I have quoted stamps the article as the production of a very able Sinn Feiner.

THEN AND NOW

If there is one personality which the canting hypocrisy of England is using more than another to play upon the religious susceptibilities of Catholics it is Cardinal Mercier. The British press and its Irish jackals are watching for everything that may give them a chance of using the Cardinal's name in a manner prejudicial to German methods. The British Government exploited him through London, and the saintly T. P. O'Connor, who has prostituted every religious and Nationalist principle he ever held, took the Cardinal under his Masonic wing, and, on introducing him to an audience, was moved to tears—truly, the greatest miracle in water since Moses struck the rock. One of the things that has struck most of us in connection with this exploiting of Belgium and her Cardinal by the British Press and politicians, is what must be the real honest opinion of the Belgians and his Eminence on this new-found friendship for their country.

We remember at the time of the death of King Leopold of Belgium, what an unholy lust these same politicians displayed for the grabbing of Belgium's territory, and to what depths of scurrilous mendacity they descended to belie the moral character of the country which they had hoped to plunder. Alfred Morce, and the other mainsprings, stirred up the agitation for English intervention in the Congo, as the only hope for saving the hands and heads of the natives from being cut off. English influence showed its power in manipulating the Press Agencies to prejudice world feeling against the Belgians. King Leopold was not cold in his grave when his private affairs and morals were laid bare to the gaze of the curious, and this kind of thing, with the usual garnish of pruriency, was served up *ad nauseam*. Had they wished the Belgians might have met this stirring up of stagnant streams by reminding the English of another Royal personage and a trip to Scarborough, and a cruise to India, which would not stand the light of day, according to the accepted standards of morality, but the Belgians though smarting under the indignities heaped

upon them and their dead monarch, ignored “the war of filth,” as one French newspaper called this British subsidized scandal-mongering.

A protest signed by all the leaders of political and religious thought in Belgium was sent to Washington for presentation to Congress. Cardinal Mercier appended his name as a protest against the foul-mouthed British libels on his country. So did Mons. Beernaert, President of the Executive Council, and other Ministers of State; Dr. Rochedier, President of the Synod of Evangelical Protestant Churches. Dr. Bloch, Chief Rabbi; the Presidents of the House of Representatives, the Senate of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the Royal Academy, and all other important bodies.

That is not so long ago, and Belgium cannot be unmindful of the campaign of calumny which such hired ink-slingers as Alfred Morel, Sir Conan Doyle, Stackpole, and the lesser fry carried on “to save humanity from Belgium barbarities,” and incidentally, of course, handed over the Congo to the British Rubber monopolists. Belgium is in its present position as the result of a weak King, for Alfred has none of the strength which his father displayed in keeping out of the meashes spread by British intrigue. British intrigue has made a cat’s-paw of Belgium in this affair, and as a result the once prosperous little Kingdom is to-day shattered and broken. Britain has paraded her before the world, and begged some money for her from the charitable of all nations, and to-day, through her press and her press agencies, she calls on God and the world to witness what has been done for “destitute Belgium” by the power of “British benevolence.”

A CHANGE OF FRONT

“N. D.” writing in the orthodox “Frontier Sentinel” (Newry), puts the Parliamentary attitude towards the Irish Volunteers in a new and

almost hitherto unheard of light. Referring to the famous Banishment Orders, he says:—

Not less odious than the attempt to disarm the MacNeill Volunteers is the attempt to banish the organisers—a prelude I suppose, to the intended total disruption of the organisation. It is, of course, a policy which will never achieve success. It would be bad enough if this were the work of a native Parliament, but words are inadequate to describe its enormity when we consider it is engineered from Dublin Castle—that strange, undefinable thing, that stole Red Hugh O’Donnell away from the people, that in Cromwell’s days, sent the best blood of the nation to the horrors of the Barbadoes, that banished the priests and the schoolmasters; the thing that has the blood of the United Irishmen leaders on it, sent Mitchel and his associates to the hulks, paid to the informers against the Fenians the price of their perfidy; plotted the downfall of Parnell, used all its cunning and cruelty against the Land League, and told the police : “Do not hesitate to shoot.” If this is the thing that the followers of Mr. MacNeill are being made the victims of, then I say, though I absolutely abhor and reprobate their policy, that they are being honoured beyond their deserts. If the bitterest Orangeman that ever breathed were victimised by the stupid anachronism of Dublin Castle, to use an expression of the late Joseph Chamberlain, I should be proud to have his acquaintance. Those who have decreed the banishment of these men are reckoning without their host. Ireland has already condemned “senseless prosecutions,” and the deportation of Irishmen who, at the worst, can only be described as political oddities; and it will continue to voice its indignation. The powers of a national government—even of an autocratic and stupid government—must not be usurped by anybody else, be he benevolent or autocratic, intelligent or stupid. What Dublin Castle needs, and what it never had, is a sense of humour. That is its own business, however. What we Nationalists want is not only to keep ourselves clear from the imputation that we are in any way responsible for the “Realm Act” policy that is being adopted against the Irish Volunteers, but to show that we completely

disapprove of it. We have already done so, and we must continue. Ridiculous as the MacNeillites are, they stand for a principle that all Home Rulers have irrevocably adopted—the principle of an armed force responsible to an Irish Government; and, after all, principles are more sacred than personalities.

Under the caption “Manufacturing Sinn Feiners” “N. D.” continues to strike a new note. We know the story of the English farmer, who finding a toad on the roadside, began to beat it with a stick, saying: “Ah, you toad! I will teach you to be a toad.” So, in pursuing a policy of uncompromising hostility towards the Irish Volunteers I consider that we are not only further antagonising the Sinn Fein element amongst them, but driving into the ranks of Sinn Feinism those members who have merely joined out of the conviction that it is the inalienable right of the Irish people to bear arms in self-defence. That is a right which has been declared from thousands of platforms of all shades of opinion in Ireland, and anybody who is opposed to it cannot claim to be a Nationalist. Instead of manufacturing Sinn Feiners by referring to the MacNeill following as “The Irish Volunteers”—an organisation which has no existence, so far as I know—would it not be better to endeavour to show those people the error of their ways and behave towards them in as charitable a manner, at least, as we have behaved towards the Carsonite opponents of Home Rule, who but a short time ago were threatening Nationalists (meaning Irish Catholics) with bloody war? God forgive me if I am wrong, but I hold it to be proper to treat all Irishmen, no matter what their religious or political views may be, with respect, and when we feel obliged to oppose their policies to do so with clean weapons and not with those of misrepresentation and abuse.

THINGS THEY OUGHT TO TAX

The British Exchequer appears to be hard up. Why not tax the following sources of revenue:—

Resolutions of Confidence in the “Party.”

Licences permitting “Party” orators the indiscriminate use of opprobrious terms, such as “cranks,” “soreheads,” “factionists,” etc.

Molly Maguire Lodges, and similar insanitary buildings.

Mr. Justice Kenny’s “Alarms and excursions” addresses to Dublin Juries.

Public bodies who wish to change their minds about taxation and other bogies.

STOP PRESS!

THE IRISH REPUBLIC

(Irish) “War News” is published to-day because a momentous thing has happened. The Irish Republic has been declared in Dublin, and a Provisional Government has been appointed to administer its affairs. The following have been named as the Provisional Government:—

Thomas J. Clarke.

Sean Mac Diarmada

P. H. Pearse.

James Connolly.

Thomas Mac Donagh.

Eamonn Ceannt.

Joseph Plunkett.

The Irish Republic was proclaimed by a poster, which was prominently displayed in Dublin.

At 9.30 a.m. this morning the following statement was made by Commandant-General, P. H. Pearse:—

The Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 24th April, at 12 noon. Simultaneously with the issue of the proclamation of the Provisional Government the Dublin Division of the Army of the Republic, including the Irish Volunteers, Citizen Army, Hibernian Rifles, and other bodies, occupied dominating points in the city. The G.P.O. was seized at 12 noon, the Castle was attacked at the same moment, and shortly afterwards the Four Courts were occupied. The Irish troops hold the City Hall and dominate the Castle. Attacks were immediately commenced by the British forces and were everywhere repulsed. At the moment of writing this report, (9.30 a.m., Tuesday) the Republican forces hold all their positions and the British forces have nowhere broken through. There has been heavy and continuous fighting for nearly 24 hours, the casualties of the enemy being much more numerous than those on the Republican side. The Republican forces everywhere are fighting with splendid gallantry. The populace of Dublin are plainly with the Republic, and the officers and men are everywhere cheered as they march through the streets. The whole centre of the city is in the hands of the Republic, whose flag flies from the G.P.O.

Commandant General P. H. Pearse is commanding in chief of the Army of the Republic and is President of the Provisional Government. Commandant General James Connolly is commanding the Dublin districts. Communication with the country is largely cut, but reports to hand show that the country is rising, and bodies of men from Kildare and Fingall have already reported in Dublin.

MORE PIRACY

The condition of affairs illustrated in the following comment from “The Advocate,” a New York Irish Redmondite paper, is not at all unlike piracy on the high seas. In its latest issue to hand “The Advocate” says:—

“Since the British Government began to seize the mails we have been informed by some of our Swedish acquaintances that the little cheques they have sent to the old folks at home have never reached their destination. If this be true, and we have no reason to doubt it, then the British Government stands convicted of the most contemptible kind of petty larceny which the criminal annals of the world can show. Sweden is just now experiencing a depression in all kinds of business owing to being cut off from other neutral nations by Great Britain, and consequently a little help from their exiled brethren is much needed in countless Swedish households. Now, it may be asked what Great Britain hopes to accomplish by preventing the exiled Swedes from helping their suffering kindred at home? The reason is not far to seek. The Socialist party is very strong in Sweden, and is growing stronger in proportion to the increase in the difficulty of the masses to make ends meet. Now, Great Britain knows that were it not for the opposition of the Socialists Sweden would long since have entered the war on the side of Germany, hence it is to her interest to add by every means at her disposal to the Socialists’ power. Therefore in robbing the mails of these little cheques he is robbing deserving people of the means of tiding over the dull season, and expects that, driven by necessity, many will turn to the Socialists in their extremity, and thus Sweden’s continued neutrality will be secured. This is the explanation our Swedish acquaintances give of England’s thieving conduct in this regard. For the honour of our poor human nature, let us hope the case is not as bad as it is said to be.”